



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

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News Release

MEXICAN DRUG DEALER PLEADS GUILTY TO KIDNAPPING 3 JUVENILES

SAN ANTONIO — As a result of an investigation by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) special agents, the leader of a marijuana smuggling organization pleaded guilty today to ordering the kidnapping of three juveniles.

Rafael Carrillo Rios, 27, a Mexican national, pleaded guilty this morning in a federal court in Del Rio to one count of conspiracy to kidnap. During the trial Rios testified that he ordered the kidnapping of the three juveniles after they purportedly stole a large quantity of marijuana from him.

The juveniles were kidnapped in Del Rio, Texas, and transported across the international border to Ciudad Acuna, where they were held captive and beaten. One of the juveniles reported that his hand had been struck with a hammer and that he had been shot several times with a BB gun. After being held for between 12 and 36 hours, the juveniles were ultimately released in Del Rio.

The investigation revealed that Rios' smuggling organization is based in Ciudad Acuna, Coahuila, Mexico.

"This guilty plea shines a light the true nature of criminal drug smuggling organizations," said Special Agent-in-Charge Alonzo Pena of the San Antonio ICE office. "We consider such groups to be a national security risk, and ICE is committed to uncovering and dismantling them."

Rios faces between 20 years to life in federal prison for the crime. Sentencing is scheduled for Jan. 6, 2006, in Del Rio before United States District Judge William Wayne Justice. Assistant United States Attorney John A. Peralta prosecuted this case.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.